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ABSTRACT

The recommendations of the National Association of State Boards of Education's Study Group on Special Education focus on: (1) creation of a new belief system and vision that includes all students; (2) encouragement of collaboration between general and special educators to better serve the diverse student population; and (3) breaking the link between funding, placement, and handicapping label. After an introduction presenting the recommendations, the report reviews the history of special education, focusing on access and problems with the present system. Principles of inclusive education and examples of successful inclusive practices and programs are provided. The fourth chapter provides the rationale for the first recommendation concerning the state board's leadership role in promoting inclusion. The fifth chapter discusses the recommendation concerning personnel in an inclusive system. Actions urged include merging special education and general education training programs and reducing the number of specialized teaching certificates. The final chapter examines the recommendation concerning the relationship between funding and disability label, and considers flat funding to discourage over-identification, funding formulas, linking special education and general education finance reform, creating special incentives for inclusion, and using various funding sources. The report concludes with a checklist considering the roles of other groups in creating an inclusive system, including parents/families, teachers, local boards and local school administrators, special educators, state legislators, federal government, and higher education. (Contains 60 references.) (DB)

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